



AMERICAN
SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS
COUNCIL

Clean Water is Good for Business ★ Case Study

Dock to Dish, Montauk, NY

Dock to Dish is a community-based seafood sourcing program that provides local chefs and members direct access to fresh, sustainable seafood, fully traceable to its origin and the fisher of the haul. Sean Barrett, lifelong fisherman and restaurateur, was inspired by concierge fishermen in Spain who brought their hauls to the backdoors of restaurants. Realizing this practice could be viable in the U.S., Barrett and fellow veteran seafarers established Dock to Dish.

"We're the salt-water brother of the farm-to-table movement, selling seafood that is most sustainable and inflicts the least impact on the environment," says Barrett. "To gather our fresh, high-quality product, we rely extensively on clean, fresh, local water sources.

"If the watersheds suffer contamination, we can't have an effective business. What would be even worse than losing business

would be losing the public's trust. Clean water is vital for us to provide a consistently safe, delicious product that is better than supermarket seafood. Without public perception that Dock to Dish provides better quality product, our customer base and support would likely vanish. This business benefits too many people for it to be lost due to contaminated water sources."

"We can be the saltwater brother of the farm-to-table movement."

– Sean Barrett



The threat to business from contaminated water is real: At times, the Hudson River has been too polluted to fish, which means fishermen must stop collection for the day. Stoppage cuts into profits and affects public perception of Dock to Dish's reliability – problems supermarket fish departments don't experience.

Dock to Dish fishermen's work has been hampered by water contaminated with nitrogen runoff and algal blooms. Bioaccumulation of impurities is also a serious danger.

Certain waterways have been closed due to reported deaths of pets or human health concerns and illness. This makes the waterways, and therefore the fish that come from them, a threat to

public safety. In turn, through no fault of its own, the Dock to Dish system is faced with inconsistent availability of quality product. This problem erodes consumer trust and makes this worthwhile system less economically viable.

Laws have been utilized successfully to clean up contaminated watersheds, and Barrett advises other company leaders to engage on the issue as it affects their operations. Barrett himself serves on the Marine Resources Advisory Council and works with the Department of Environmental Conservation, groups focusing on the regulation of seafood to protect public health. He recommends using success stories to explain the economic benefits of restoring and maintaining watersheds. For example, the food web has been healed in the Hudson by banning certain chemicals, and fish populations (as well as the bald eagle) have returned. Showing people the "before" and "after" of smart public policy will increase public and private sector understanding of how essential clean waterways are, to not only the fishing industry but also to tourism industries, including restaurants, charter boating and whale watching. **Clean water is good for business, and well worth protection from our policymakers nationwide.**



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WATER
FOR ALL**

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